



Sign up to support the campaign for adequate, accessible and enabling minimum income

EMIN-UK petition to UK government:

<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/p/emin-uk>

EU petition:

<https://you.wemove.eu/campaigns/Guaranteed-Minimum-Income-Scheme>

Adequate income: We want a floor under social assistance benefits at least at the poverty line. This is 60% of median (i.e. average) household income after housing costs. Plus: a budget standards mechanism to benchmark what that money can buy.

After housing costs, the UK's Universal Credit and the six working-age benefits it replaces (Income Support; income-related Job-Seekers' Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance; Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit and Housing Benefit) are worth less than 30% of median income. How can you live decently on that? End the freeze and caps on benefits. Cuts to benefits and means-tested wage top-ups, along with harsh sanctions, have also helped bad employers to cut wages and worsen conditions. Our campaign aims to lift people out of income poverty and help put a floor under wages. Minimum wages are below the poverty line.

Accessible income: Benefits should be available to all who need them for as long as they need them. All people are entitled to be treated fairly and with dignity, every time. Benefits should be simple to claim and receive, including for people with a disability and low-paid, gig economy and self-employed workers. People must have more and better information and support to claim their rights. Assessment of people with a disability must be sorted to make it transparent, fair and decent every time.

Enabling income: call a halt to harsh benefits sanctions. Low benefits and harsh sanctions do not help people into sustainable decent work. They can push people to foodbanks, damage their mental health and split families.

In the UK. UK government must set out a plan for benefits to reach an adequate minimum income, tested against expenditure needed to live in dignity and uprated for inflation. We will need a target, a timetable and legal force. After Brexit, government must not unpick social and employment rights.

In the EU. Our aim is the progressive realisation of the right to adequate, accessible and enabling minimum income across Europe, funded by fair taxation. Schemes should pay at least 60% of median household income, reality-tested with expenditure budgets because that 60% buys you very different amounts in different countries. Governments must work towards a legal right to adequate minimum income, so we want a Framework Directive (this means law) on Adequate Minimum Income. To begin with, we want a common effort across Europe to drive up standards.

Why sign and why now?

- Income poverty is rising in Europe. Benefits cuts and harsh sanctions are rife. Wages are low or stagnating in many countries. Low paid, insecure and gig economy work, and bogus self-employment, are growing. Low pay means more workers dependent on top-up benefits.
- We want a legal floor under benefits' incomes (i.e. social assistance), at least at the poverty line in each country, because in or out of paid work, no one should be forced into poverty.
- Good minimum income schemes help people in need to live in dignity and stay active, connected to work and integrated in society. Poor quality schemes lock people in poverty. More equal societies have better health and better well-being. The schemes act as economic stabilisers for countries when times are tough. Good schemes can help prevent working poverty and cross-border labour exploitation. Relatively, schemes don't cost a lot; by far the biggest bit of the UK social security budget is retirement pensions.